

A circular black ink stamp from the Intellectual Property Office (IPO). The text "IPO" is at the top, "JCI39" is at the top right, "AUG 21 2003" is in the center, and "PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE" is at the bottom. The stamp is slightly tilted.

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

MASAHIKO KUBOTA ET AL.

Examiner: Not Yet Assigned

Group Art Unit: Not Yet Assigned

August 20, 2003

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Sir:

In compliance with the duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. § 1.56 and in accordance with the practice under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.97 and 1.98, the Examiner's attention is directed to the documents listed on the enclosed Form PTO-1449. Pursuant to recent changes to 37 C.F.R. 1.98(a)(2)(i), copies of the listed U.S. Patent documents are not enclosed (a copy of the PTO notice is attached).

For the concise explanation of relevance for the non-English documents, the Examiner is referred to the English Abstracts attached hereto. Applicants note that JP 6-45242 corresponds with U.S. Patent No. 4,657,631 and JP 3143307 corresponds with U.S. Patent No. 5,478,606.

The Examiner's attention is also directed to the following U.S. Applications:

<u>APPLICATION NO.</u>	<u>FILING DATE</u>	<u>GROUP ART UNIT</u>
10/615,302	07/09/03	N.Y.A.
10/615,305	07/09/03	N.Y.A.
10/615,143	07/09/03	N.Y.A.

A copy of each cited Application is enclosed.

It is respectfully requested that the above information be considered by the Examiner and that a copy of the enclosed Form PTO-1449 be returned indicating that such information has been considered.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

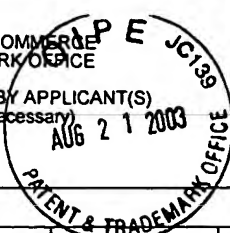


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FORM PTO 1449 (modified) U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE LIST OF REFERENCES CITED BY APPLICANT(S) (Use several sheets if necessary)				ATTY DOCKET NO. 03500.017372.		APPLICATION NO. 10/615,289	
				APPLICANT MASAHIKO KUBOTA ET AL.			
				FILING DATE July 9, 2003		GROUP N.Y.A.	
U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS							
*EXAMINER INITIAL		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUBCLASS	FILING DATE IF APPROPRIATE
		4,657,631	04/14/87	Noguchi	156	655	
		5,478,606	12/26/95	Ohkuma et al.	427	555	
FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS							
		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY	CLASS	SUBCLASS	TRANSLATION YES/NO/ OR ABSTRACT
	JP	(2002)326515		JAPAN			Abstract
	JP	3010089		JAPAN			Abstract
	JP	6-45242		JAPAN			Abstract & corresponding U.S. Patent No. 4,657,631
	JP	3143307		JAPAN			Abstract & corresponding U.S. Patent No. 5,478,606
OTHER DOCUMENT(S) (Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, Etc.)							
EXAMINER				DATE CONSIDERED			

*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

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